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Environment and sustainable development: International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction

Guyana and Mexico:* draft resolution

International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction: successor arrangements

The General Assembly,

Recalling General Assembly resolutions 44/236 of 22 December 1989, 49/22 A of 2 December 1994, 49/22 B of 20 December 1994 and 53/185 of 15 December 1998, and reiterating Economic and Social Council resolution 1999/63 of 30 July 1999 on the successor arrangements for the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction,

Recalling also the results of the programme forum on the International Decade, held at Geneva from 5 to 9 July 1999, and the Geneva mandate on disaster reduction adopted by the forum, together with the strategy document entitled "A safer world in the twenty-first century: risk and disaster reduction",

Recalling further the forward-looking platform for international concerted disaster reduction as developed by the World Conference on Natural Disaster Reduction and as expressed in the Yokohama Strategy for a Safer World: Guidelines for Natural Disaster Prevention, Preparedness and Mitigation and its Plan of Action,[1]

Reiterating that natural disasters damage the social and economic infrastructure of all countries, although the long-term consequences of natural disasters are especially severe for developing countries and hamper their sustainable development,

Recognizing the need for the international community to demonstrate the firm political determination required to utilize scientific and technical knowledge to reduce vulnerability to natural disasters and environmental hazards, taking into account the particular needs of developing countries,

* On behalf of the States Members of the United Nations that are members of the Group of 77 and China.

[1] A/CONF.172/9, resolution 1, annex.

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Having considered the report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of Economic and Social Council resolution 1999/63,[2]

Noting the Declaration on Technical Cooperation for the Prevention and Relief of Natural Disasters, adopted by the Rio Group at its summit meeting in Mexico in May 1999, as well as the results of the 1999 Rio de Janeiro summit,

Taking into account the consideration of natural disasters contained in the report of the Third United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, held in Vienna, from 19 to 30 July 1999,[3]

1. *Takes note with appreciation* of the reports of the Secretary-General concerning the activities of the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction[4] and on the recommendations and institutional arrangements for disaster reduction activities of the United Nations system after the conclusion of the Decade;[5]

2. *Expresses deep concern* at the increasing number and scale of natural disasters, resulting in massive losses of life and long-term negative social, economic and environmental consequences on vulnerable societies worldwide, in particular in developing countries;

3. *Endorses* the proposals put forward in the report of the Secretary-General[5] to ensure the swift establishment of future arrangements for disaster reduction as well as functional continuity for the effective implementation of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction;

4. *Also endorses* the Secretary-General's proposal to establish an inter-agency task force and inter-agency secretariat for disaster reduction, in a flexible manner, for an initial period during the biennium 2000-2001, and to undertake a review of these temporary arrangements after the first year of operations with a view to submitting proposals on adjustments regarding their definite shape;[6]

5. *Decides* to maintain the observance of the International Day for Natural Disaster Reduction on the second Wednesday of October;

6. *Requests* the Secretary-General to establish a trust fund, from voluntary contributions, for disaster reduction to enable the funding of the inter-agency secretariat for disaster reduction, and to transfer all assets of the Trust Fund for the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction to the new trust fund for disaster reduction, with effect on 1 January 2000;

7. *Calls on* Governments, in cooperation with the United Nations system, and non-governmental organizations to assist the Secretary-General and the Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs to implement a comprehensive strategy to maximize international cooperation in the field of natural disasters, based upon an effective division of labour, from prevention to early warning, response, mitigation, rehabilitation and reconstruction, including through the development and strengthening of regional approaches that take into account regional, subregional, national and local circumstances and needs;

8. *Requests* the Secretary-General to solicit the required inputs from Governments, the relevant organizations of the United Nations system and non-governmental organizations

[2] A/54/497.

[3] A/CONF.184/6.

[4] A/54/132-E/1999/80 and Add.1.

[5] See A/54/136-E/1999/89.

[6] See A/54/497, paras. 11-14.

in order to further optimize and disseminate listings of organizations of the United Nations system and non-governmental organizations in order to further optimize and disseminate listings of organizations of civil protection at all levels, with updated inventories of available resources, to provide assistance in the event of natural disasters;

9. *Also requests* the Secretary-General to further optimize and disseminate all the necessary information, including handbooks, that guide the international community at large in the effective management of international cooperation in the fields of disaster prevention, early warning, response, mitigation, rehabilitation and reconstruction;

10. *Emphasizes* the urgent need to further develop and use the existing scientific and technical knowledge to reduce the vulnerability to natural disasters, bearing in mind the particular needs of developing countries, and, in this regard, calls on all countries to strengthen scientific research and training of experts in universities and specialized institutions and to promote the exchange of information;

11. *Recognizes* the importance of early warning as an essential element in the culture of prevention, and encourages renewed efforts at all levels to contribute to natural hazard monitoring and impact prediction, development and transfer of technology, capacity-building for the detection of natural hazards, issuance and communication of early warnings, as well as education and professional training, public information and awareness-raising, to ensure adequate action warnings;

12. *Reaffirms* the need for strengthening an international framework for the improvement of early warning systems by developing an effective international mechanism on early warning, including the transfer of technology related to early warning to developing countries, under the auspices of the United Nations, as an integral part of future strategies and framework or any arrangements for natural disaster reduction;

13. *Requests* the Secretary-General to report through the Economic and Social Council to the fifty-sixth session of the General Assembly on the implementation of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction, under the agenda item entitled "Environment and sustainable development".